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**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: special economic assistance to individual countries or regions**

# Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and rehabilitation in Tajikistan

## Report of the Secretary-General**

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* A/55/150 and Corr. 1 and 2.

** The late submission of the report is due to the recently changed situation in Tajikistan; the impact of new peace-building activities and humanitarian needs are included in the report.

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# I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 11 of General Assembly resolution 54/96 A of 8 December 1999, by which the Assembly called on the Secretary-General to continue to monitor the humanitarian situation in Tajikistan and to report to the Assembly at its fifty-fifth session on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution. The report covers the period from 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000.

# II. Current situation in Tajikistan and future role of the United Nations political presence in the country

2. The main provisions of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan (A/52/219-S/1997/510, annex I) have been implemented, and the transition period ended with the first multi-party parliamentary election and the first session of the professional parliament, which was held in the country earlier this year. Three main factors have contributed to the success of the peace process: early United Nations involvement in the resolution of the Tajik conflict; the continuous strong support of guarantor States of the General Agreement, who are members of the United Nations-led contact group; and the political will of the two Tajik parties and their leadership to resolve differences through dialogue.

3. The United Nations was instrumental in assisting the negotiation and implementation processes conducted under its aegis. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) should be regarded as a successful peacekeeping operation. The Security Council acknowledged the significant achievement of the Tajik parties, which had managed to overcome many obstacles and put their country on the path of peace, national reconciliation and democracy. The Council joined the Secretary-General in hoping that those achievements would be consolidated in the further strengthening of the institutions in the country with a view to the democratic, economic and social development of Tajik society. The Council supported the proposal of the Secretary-General to establish a United Nations Tajikistan office for peace-building following the termination of UNMOT on 15 May 2000.

4. Tajikistan has now entered a new phase of post-conflict peace-building. However, that process is affected by both internal and external problems. Issues that are still unresolved include post-conflict internal security questions, including organized crime and mass drug trafficking, the need to promote and protect human rights, unresolved refugee problems and instability in neighbouring Afghanistan. The extreme poverty faced by 80 per cent of the population, recent poor harvests, severe drought, and the collapse of the social safety net, public health, sanitation and educational systems render the achievements of the peace process extremely vulnerable. Those problems cannot be resolved by internal means alone and require continued international economic assistance. In the case of Tajikistan, such assistance has always been insufficient.

5. Tajikistan needs to receive more than exclusively humanitarian aid. Sustained economic growth that would also ensure the successful rehabilitation of the former irregular fighters and their supporters is the key to maintaining peace and stability in Tajikistan. The programme of economic and social recovery and structural changes, including further democratization and market reforms, requires urgent and significant international development assistance. Without such assistance, the achievements of the peace process in Tajikistan might easily be endangered.

6. Accordingly, with the agreement of the Government of Tajikistan, the United Nations Tajikistan Office for Peace-building was established in June 2000 for an initial period of one year to pursue the objectives of post-conflict peace-building and consolidation of the peace. The Office has been entrusted with a mandate to provide the political framework and leadership for post-conflict peace-building activities of the United Nations system in the country, including support for the efforts of the United Nations resident coordinator and the inclusion of the Bretton Woods institutions in promoting an integrated approach to the development and implementation of post-conflict peace-building programmes.

7. The Office will help to mobilize, in close cooperation with the United Nations country team, international support for the implementation of programmes aimed at strengthening the rule of law, the promotion and protection of human rights, demobilization, voluntary arms collection and employment creation for former irregular fighters. The

Office will help to create an enabling environment for the consolidation of the peace, and will liaise with the Government, political parties and other representatives of civil society to broaden national consensus and reconciliation.

## III. Current economic situation

8. The disintegration of the former USSR and the civil war seriously affected the economic viability of the newly independent Tajikistan. The delivery of basic social services has deteriorated and living standards continue to decline. As a result, Tajikistan's economy requires urgent support. The abrupt withdrawal of subsidies provided during the Soviet era (40 per cent of budgetary expenditures), unfavourable agricultural incentives and weak administrative capacity have also contributed to the steep economic decline of the country, pushing over 80 per cent of the population below the poverty line. High rates of unemployment, in particular among youth, the non-functional national safety net system, a lack of opportunities for private investment, declining domestic production, competition for scarce resources, and other financial, cultural and criminal factors have contributed to political instability. The situation is worsening increasingly in rural areas, and a large caseload of rural and urban vulnerable groups continue to rely on international relief assistance. Wage labour, remittances, assistance provided by international organizations, trade and drug trafficking constitute the major sources of income. However, the Government's efforts to introduce structural changes, in particular the privatization process, have resulted in 3.7 per cent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) in 1999. The nation's major economic resources include vast water reserves, which are scarce in Central Asia, cotton, processing of imported aluminium ore, and some deposits of gold and semi-precious stones.

## IV. Humanitarian operations

### A. General

9. The implementation of the General Agreement, which provided for the implementation of constitutional changes to allow for the holding of new presidential and parliamentary elections and the demobilization and reintegration of combatants, has provided a foundation for the national reconciliation of Tajikistan society. However, the humanitarian situation has not improved due to severe economic deterioration and reduced earning power for the great majority of the Tajik population. Currently, a large segment of the population relies on food assistance provided by the World Food Programme (WFP) and other international humanitarian organizations, such as the Aga Khan Foundation, German Agro Action, Care International, Mercy Corps International, Save the Children, Mission Ost and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Food production has declined over the past few years. In 1999, cereal production amounted to 475,000 tons, a drop of 17 per cent compared to 1998. This was in the main due to unfavourable weather conditions, deteriorating irrigation facilities, crop blight (brown rust and smut) and a lack of resources to procure necessary agricultural inputs.

10. Basic social services, such as health, water and sanitation, and education, have deteriorated due to a lack of essential supplies and proper maintenance. The salaries of social services employees are not enough to cover their basic daily requirements and are often paid after delays lasting months. The standard of education continues to decline. Many children do not regularly attend schools due to a lack of clothing, footwear, little or no heating in the schools during the winter, and shortages of textbooks and other basic school supplies. Only 35 per cent of the population, mainly in urban areas, have access to piped water, and 54 per cent of the urban population lack adequate sanitation facilities. Water distribution systems are non-existent in most rural areas and are extremely inefficient where they exist. In 1999, an estimated 2,500 children died from waterborne disease. High infant mortality rates (21.7 per 1,000 live births) and maternal mortality rates (64.5 per 100,000 live births) and a decline in life expectancy from 70.5 years in 1991 to 68.3 years in 1995-1999 are evidence that Tajikistan's health situation has fallen behind that of other Central Asian States. Most health-care institutions are dependent on essential drugs provided by international organizations. There is a shortage of medicines and medical professionals in remote villages. Of particular concern is the lack of resources to purchase vaccines and to control epidemics, such as typhoid and malaria epidemics, and outbreaks of tuberculosis, dysentery, brucellosis, viral hepatitis and sexually transmitted diseases. According to official estimates, over 7,000 cases of typhoid and

more than 13,000 cases of malaria were registered in 1999.

11. A substantial lack of funding is severely affecting United Nations operations in Tajikistan. Donor response to the 2000 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal stands at approximately 32 per cent, some of which comes from a recommitment of 1999 pledges, which has had a serious impact on emergency and rehabilitation programming, impacting especially on efforts to resettle and rehabilitate refugees and internally displaced persons.

12. Perhaps most worrying of all is the impact of the worst drought in over 70 years, which is currently affecting much of Central Asia. According to a preliminary assessment conducted by WFP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), cereal production could drop as much as 40 per cent below the 1999 level, which was already 17 per cent below the 1998 level. The President of Tajikistan has appealed to the United Nations and several major donor countries for humanitarian assistance to address the consequences of the drought. The impact on already poor people and communities is devastating, with over three million people in need of emergency support. Failure to provide support is likely to result in increased mortality among vulnerable groups and undermine recent progress in national reconciliation and rehabilitation of the economy.

13. Demobilization of armed groups and creating job opportunities for demobilized fighters remain major challenges for both the Government of Tajikistan and the United Nations system. Since the Government of Tajikistan does not have adequate resources to employ demobilized fighters in civilian activities, it is extremely important that alternative means of livelihood are created in order to engage the demobilized fighters and consolidate the achievements of the peace process. The continued support of the international community to create job opportunities in order to further strengthen peace and stability in the country remains crucial.

14. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, led by the resident representative/ humanitarian coordinator, has coordinated humanitarian activities in Tajikistan. As part of that function, the Office organized the preparation of the 2000 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Tajikistan (launched in November 1999) and conducted a mid-term review of the Appeal in June 2000. It also led the development of a national contingency plan for emergency preparedness and response. Sectoral issues are addressed through regular coordination meetings arranged by designated agencies. Currently, the United Nations system is developing a common strategy to bridge the gap between humanitarian and development assistance. The broad objective of the strategy will be to link the operational strategies of the individual United Nations agencies and to address the short-, medium- and longer-term needs and priorities of the country. Regrettably, no funding has been committed in 2000 for coordination activities to further the long-term strategic response exercise.

## B. Security developments affecting humanitarian relief efforts

15. During the second half of 1999 and early 2000, brutal killings by criminal groups, armed clashes between criminal groups and government forces, kidnappings for ransom, hijacking of vehicles and forced entry into homes have remained a feature of the security landscape, posing a threat to United Nations personnel in Tajikistan. However, after the Government took special measures in March 2000 to control criminal activities in Dushanbe, the level of criminality in the capital declined notably.

16. A security assessment in the Karategin Valley in fall 1999 reported an improved security situation in the area. As a result, security restrictions for Gharm, Jirgital and Tajikabad districts were eased, allowing United Nations assistance to reach needy populations. Parts of the Karategin Valley, such as Tavildara, Darband and Faizabad, continue to be off-limits to United Nations international personnel, however. Nevertheless, some humanitarian and rehabilitation projects are being implemented by local personnel employed by United Nations agencies in those areas. In January 2000, a security assessment was carried out in Kofarnikhon District, East of Dushanbe, followed by a joint inter-agency security and humanitarian assessment. The mission recommended that Kofarnikhon also be made accessible, with the condition that international staff of United Nations agencies manage operational activities from Dushanbe. To date, the main road between Dushanbe and the Karategin Valley continues to be out of bounds for United Nations personnel.

## C. Activities of non-governmental organizations

17. Some 40 international and over 100 national non-governmental organizations, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), provide humanitarian assistance in Tajikistan. NGOs carry out humanitarian activities in all sectors, the bulk of assistance concentrating on food and health programmes. The NGO community accounts for most of the emergency drugs distributed to health institutions throughout the country. Sectoral coordination is carried out through the sectoral coordination committees organized and chaired by the relevant agencies within the United Nations system. There is also an NGO coordination body which works closely with the United Nations system.

18. The NGO community continues to face certain obstacles from various government authorities, especially in the form of demands for tax payments. Recently, customs authorities sealed the warehouses of three NGOs providing humanitarian food aid to different parts of the country for their alleged failure to pay duties on humanitarian goods normally exempt from taxes.

19. The general decline in funding for humanitarian activities by the donor community in Tajikistan has also affected some of the international NGOs operating in the country. Priority activities, especially in the fields of agriculture, water and sanitation, and education, have had to be cut back as a result.

## D. Relief food assistance

20. Over 60 per cent of the Tajik population derives its livelihood from agriculture. Of a total area of 243,000 square kilometres (km), only 7 per cent of land is arable (93 per cent of the country is mountainous). Tajikistan is classified as a low-income food-deficit country. Domestic cereal production meets only about one half of national needs, the rest being covered by commercial imports and food aid. Over 80 per cent of citizens live below the poverty line and 25 per cent need food assistance to survive. Retail food prices are high relative to typical incomes. The main coping strategy for many families, even in urban areas, is to grow food on small-scale private plots. The United Nations maintains that rehabilitation and development of the agricultural sector to achieve food security are priorities for international assistance.

21. The 2000 cereal harvest in Tajikistan is likely to be affected by two major factors. First, the agricultural sector faces persistent problems of obsolete machinery, deteriorating irrigation systems, lack of quality seeds, shortages and high prices of fertilizer, pesticides and other inputs, unavailability of credit for agricultural production, and complications of ownership related to the transition from state-run collective farming to private farming. Second, the 2000 cereal crop is being affected by the lowest rainfall levels in 74 years, coupled with above-average ground temperatures. The resulting drought is a major cause for the failure of crops on non-irrigated land. The production of staple cereals is therefore expected to decline for the third consecutive year and the country will face the largest inter-annual drop in cereal production in recent years. Given pre-existing widespread poverty shortages and rising prices, the drought will affect larger sectors of the poorest population. In the second half of 2000, emphasis will need to be placed on drought response, initially in the form of food aid and related non-food items, and later in the form of seeds and tools to ensure a better crop in subsequent years.

22. Since July 1999, WFP Tajikistan has been implementing a protracted relief and recovery operation, which has been extended until December 2000. Under the operation, WFP plans to reach 370,000 beneficiaries, with a commitment of 50,082 tons of food commodities. However, as of June 2000, only 50 per cent of the total requirement had been pledged, with the result that WFP food stocks have been insufficient to cover programme needs. Although some additional resources are expected to arrive during the summer, they will be sufficient only to cover ongoing programme needs for two to three months and provide some immediate small-scale relief to the drought-affected population under the operation's relief window. That is an inadequate response to the pressing need presented by the drought. More commitments are needed in the next six months to prevent loss of life.

23. WFP implements joint projects with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), whereby UNHCR provides funds for the procurement of non-food items and WFP provides the food component. Projects include a variety of activities, such as land-lease schemes, income generation and land rehabilitation activities. WFP

chairs a fortnightly food aid coordination meeting in order to exchange information on projects implemented by agencies involved in food assistance, review the food situation in different parts of the country and consider other programme and policy-related issues, such as approach to food-for-work projects, rations and criteria for targeting vulnerability. WFP continues to prepare regular overviews on the food supply situation in the country, monitoring the activities of food agencies by geographic location, the yearly food aid plan and other related data.

## E. Agriculture support

24. Humanitarian agencies continue to provide assistance for agricultural development in various ways. In collaboration with UNHCR and WFP, FAO has provided seeds, fertilizer and tools to over 5,000 returnee and poor rural families in the Khatlon area (South-west Tajikistan) to improve household food security. FAO provides substantial assistance to the animal health and public health sectors, through support to field veterinarians. FAO's potato seed multiplication programme continued for the third year, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. Having undertaken a review of the seed sector, FAO has prepared a comprehensive project document to support the sector and drafted a new seed law for Tajikistan. In March 2000, FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture also organized a workshop on the theme "Strategy for agricultural development in Tajikistan".

25. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programme has supported agricultural development efforts in the Karategin Valley by distributing high-quality seeds to farming constituencies and rehabilitating basic agricultural infrastructures. A number of international NGOs have also been supporting the agriculture sector through the distribution of high-quality seeds, fertilizers, pesticides and other essential agricultural inputs, as well as undertaking small-scale repair and rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure. Due to limited donor response, however, international assistance to agriculture has not reached the critical mass necessary to accomplish a major turnaround in the performance of the sector.

## F. Refugee repatriation and support

26. At the height of the conflict, approximately 700,000 people were displaced by fighting into the South of the country or into neighbouring countries. Although most of those have returned home following the success of the peace agreement, some continue to be displaced, living with host families. In addition, the repatriation and reintegration of refugees from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan is not complete. UNHCR, having accomplished a major programme of return of 48,000 refugees during 1993-1998, continued to assist voluntary repatriation from Commonwealth of Independent States countries. In 1999, 4,670 refugees were repatriated with UNHCR assistance. UNHCR has endeavoured to match the return of refugees with a reintegration programme, emphasizing the rehabilitation of social amenities, opportunities for income generation, access to land, and support to beneficiaries in the form of seeds, fertilizer and microcredit schemes. In addition to this assistance, UNHCR monitors the returnees, in cooperation in some areas with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), to ensure that their basic rights are respected and to guarantee their successful reintegration into society.

27. UNHCR implements its programmes in cooperation with FAO, WFP, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNDP/the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), among other organizations. It is engaged in the promotion of the capacity-building of national institutions, while at the same time strengthening its protection activities by organizing training on legal issues, judicial practices, and the promotion of human rights and the rights of the asylum seekers, in collaboration with OSCE and other national and international organizations.

28. During the first half of 1999, procedural complications imposed by transit countries delayed the repatriation of some refugees from Turkmenistan. Despite all such difficulties, 4,670 refugees were returned, against the planned figure of 5,000. The improvement of the security situation has allowed UNHCR to accelerate the resettlement of returnees from Kyrgyzstan in the Karategin Valley, which was delayed in the first half of 1999. As in previous periods, UNHCR was assisted with repatriation by other agencies, including the International

Organization for Migration, IFRC and the State Migration Service of Tajikistan.

29. As part of its reintegration activities, UNHCR has been providing short-term shelter and food assistance, along with longer-term support to the returnees through income generation projects. Since 1993, UNHCR has completed repairs to 25,000 houses, including 128 during the reporting period. UNHCR continued to implement the land-lease programme with WFP, which benefited 2,000 returnee households. Working with other agencies, UNHCR also assisted the rehabilitation of health, water and education facilities. In communities where refugees have been resettled for longer periods, UNHCR shifted its focus in early 1999 to microenterprise activities in order to increase food security and family income.

30. In the current year, UNHCR plans to facilitate the return of another 5,000 refugees from Central Asian countries and to support reintegration activities by linking those returns to the development process. The return of refugees is now expected to be completed by mid-2001. However, the refugee reintegration process continues to be onerous due to the lack of resources, bureaucratic encumbrances and the slow process of cultural reorientation. Donor support for resettlement and rehabilitation projects, aimed at resettling both internally displaced persons and refugees and regenerating livelihoods, has generally been inadequate. In particular, an additional 10,000 houses to accommodate future returnees must be reconstructed. Food aid is currently provided to over 225,000 vulnerable people, including internally displaced persons, across the country. However, urgent support is needed for longer-term projects in food security, infrastructure rehabilitation, health, water and sanitation, and education. Poverty among internally displaced persons demands a better response than that which is currently possible.

## G. Health and nutrition

31. The health sector in Tajikistan continues to be heavily dependent on support provided by international humanitarian organizations. The health status of the Tajik population can be broadly defined by an analysis of mortality, morbidity and environmental indicators. Maternal mortality rates dropped from 94.6 to 64.5 per 100,000 live births and infant mortality from 42.4 to 21.7 per 1,000 live births in 1999. Life expectancy at birth has declined from 70.5 years in 1991 to 68.3 years in 1995-2000. However, concerns have been voiced about the accuracy of registered data after the introduction of an administrative fee for the registration of births and deaths, which many families cannot afford. Drug abuse is another serious health problem that continues to grow, especially among young adults and the unemployed.

32. The number of unsupervised home births has increased to nearly 30 per cent of all births and in certain rural areas to more than 90 per cent. Birth intervals are, on average, less than two years for most women and more than 40 per cent of all pregnant women suffer from anaemia. The number of low birth-weight babies has increased to more than 17 per cent of all live births. The incidence of sexually transmitted diseases has also increased, with syphilis levels increasing from 1.6 per 100,000 in 1991 to 16.3 per 100,000 in 1999. It is estimated that between 40 and 50 per cent of the adult female population may be suffering from some form of sexually transmitted diseases. Communicable diseases, such as tuberculosis, malaria and diarrhoeal diseases, were the most prevalent during the reporting period. Malaria incidence remains high. However, the number of official registered cases of malaria dropped 60 per cent due to the support provided by European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and NGOs.

33. Immunization rates were previously high, although coverage was more limited in areas suffering from persistent insecurity. Coverage for anti-tuberculosis vaccine was 98 per cent for children up to one year. Coverage for the diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) vaccine was 94 per cent. Owing to difficulties in maintaining the cold chain, coverage rates dropped during 1999. Although tuberculosis and measles coverage continued at 98 per cent, both DPT and polio dropped to 79 per cent. UNICEF continued to support the Ministry of Health by providing vaccines and training. The cold chain facilities need to be replaced since the electricity supply in rural areas is extremely poor and unstable, thus affecting the quality of vaccines and putting the lives of thousands of children at risk.

34. Malnutrition continues to persist, especially among returnee children. Malnutrition rates for children under five years appear to have stabilized at

rather high levels. Between 30 and 50 per cent of children are chronically undernourished (stunting), while 7 to 15 per cent are acutely malnourished (wasting). UNICEF has been providing iron folate weekly supplements and supports the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Food Production in efforts towards wheat flour fortification with iron. In 1999, two maternity hospitals were certified as baby-friendly hospitals in Dushanbe and Khujand, where UNICEF and WHO are assisting in the promotion of breast-feeding and in training for health workers. UNICEF provides potassium iodate and laboratory equipment for monitoring two of the county's three salt factories (for salt iodination).

35. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has been implementing a new country programme for Tajikistan since January 2000, aimed at supporting national efforts to improve the quality of life through better reproductive health care and support to sustainable development and gender equity. Other activities include improving the distribution system and availability of contraceptives, training of health workers and nurses to advise women on reproductive health, and in-service training of reproductive health personnel.

36. The interventions undertaken by international organizations have improved access to medical care in Tajikistan. In particular, most of the hospitals and outpatient clinics in areas affected by civil conflict have been rehabilitated and re-equipped, with the assistance of UNDP/Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme (RRDP), UNHCR, the World Bank, WHO and a number of non-governmental agencies.

37. Funding for the health sector remains inadequate. Average per capita expenditure has plummeted from US$ 250 in 1990 to approximately US$ 2.50 in 1998. The loss of more than 17 per cent of the country's doctors and 21 per cent of its nurses during the last six years has caused major staff shortages and compromised professional standards. International agencies have continued to support the Government of Tajikistan through the provision of fellowships and training for health professionals. The Government has actively embraced the need for reform and the Ministry of Health is now collaborating with WHO, UNICEF and the World Bank to strengthen the health-care system, particularly in the area of primary health care. The number of hospital beds has fallen with a shift in focus to primary services.

38. WHO has continued to facilitate the coordination of health sector activities. WHO and the Ministry of Health organized a partnership meeting with donors for mobilizing resources in support of the roll back Malaria programme. Currently, humanitarian assistance provided by some international organizations is utilized in activities with a long-term developmental impact. The World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are providing credits to the Government for further sustainable development of the health-care system.

## H. Water and sanitation

39. The standard of water and sanitation services is a major concern in Tajikistan. Access to safe drinking water in periurban and rural areas is still below 30 per cent. There are entire communities, especially in the Khatlon region, which have no access to tap water. In rural areas, water is carried, mostly by women and children, from rivers or natural springs that are often polluted and located at a distance from home villages. Often the community's drinking water comes from open channels that flow through the streets and into which all wastewater is directed. The lack of clean drinking water and proper sanitation has contributed to the increase in typhoid epidemics in the country.

40. While significant investment is needed to repair deteriorating infrastructure, some rehabilitation activities in the sector have been undertaken by UNDP/RRDP and a number of international NGOs. UNICEF has also continued its water and sanitation programme in the Khatlon Oblast and expanded it to the Leninabad Oblast. The production and installation of slow sand filters and hand-washing basins, and the repair and installation of latrines at selected schools and health institutions has continued, and UNICEF's health/hygiene education project is being expanded. UNICEF has cooperated closely with a number of NGOs and governmental partners on water and sanitation planning and implementation. It should be noted that despite the involvement of many international organizations in water and sanitation activities, that sector has thus far received the lowest funding.

## I. Education

41. The downward trend in school enrolment (from 100 per cent before the eruption of civil conflict in 1992 to 67.8 per cent in 1999) persisted during the reporting period. Most of the educational infrastructure, including school buildings, furniture and learning materials, has been destroyed due to the civil conflict and neglect. Children in most schools, especially girls and those in remote and rural areas, lack proper clothing or basic education supplies. Major impediments to improvement in the education sector have been inadequate funding and limited capacity to restore the collapsed infrastructure. It is vitally important to reverse the persistent decline in school enrolment and literacy rate in a country that had 100 per cent enrolment and 98 per cent literacy a decade ago.

42. UNICEF has provided school learning materials, including textbooks for grades 1 to 4, for the most disadvantaged schools in several parts of the country. The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank are supporting the Ministry of Education through a pilot project in order to renovate 20 schools and provide them with furniture and textbooks in selected regions. Other agencies, such as UNDP/RRDP, WFP, UNHCR and a number of NGOs, have contributed to the rehabilitation and restoration of schools in different parts of the country.

## J. Child protection

43. UNICEF recently signed a new country programme of cooperation with the Government of Tajikistan for the five-year period 2000-2004. The country programme includes child protection measures. A hotline for teenagers programme established by the NGO Women Scientists of Tajikistan provides 24-hour service, receiving over 200 telephone calls per month. Magne Roundalin has conducted seminars on child protection to help children suffering emotional trauma, which is reflected in the UNICEF child enrichment and young peoples' well-being programmes.

## K. Rehabilitation and development

44. UNDP is playing a lead role in transition activities bridging humanitarian assistance and development. With the completion of a Tajikistan living standards survey and follow-up poverty assessment, both co-funded with the World Bank, UNDP, in collaboration with FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and UNFPA, ensured that key ministries have access to the data collected, with the provision of computers, training and the database itself.

45. UNDP/RRDP, executed by UNOPS, has successfully completed hundreds of sub-projects, including water and sewage systems, schools, clinics, hospitals, roads, embankments and bridges. The process of identifying and prioritizing community needs and the tendering and selection of contractors has been managed by the district development advisory committees created by the project. The committees, supported by professional advisers, will now have new responsibilities as monitors and advisers to the community to ensure the project's ultimate sustainability.

46. Another priority activity is the reintegration of former combatants, particularly in the Karategin Valley. UNDP/RRDP sub-projects have been well received by communities and officials. Moreover, the security situation, while precarious, has remained calm enough for activities to continue in those areas open to United Nations personnel. However, insecurity in Gharm has resulted in the withdrawal of international and non-Gharmi national staff from the UNOPS office in the area. UNDP/RRDP initiatives play an important role in promoting the stability in the country, and continued emphasis could be placed on conflict-prevention activities in future programming. A cross-border initiative between UNDP Tajikistan and UNDP Kyrgyzstan in the Ferghana Valley is an excellent example. A Swiss-funded project, it targets the core of social conflict and ethnic tension caused by the division of resources within communities by international borders. Through the implementation of the sub-projects, which are mainly related to water resource rehabilitation and management, Tajik and Kyrgyz elements within communities are being drawn together to find a common solution, as well as accept common responsibility for the success of the project.

47. UNDP's women in development project is continuing its contribution to mitigating the impact of the marginalization of women in Tajikistan. The women in development bureau supports the empowerment of women through its microcredit schemes and university scholarships programme for

disadvantaged young women, as well as through advocacy and institutional-building activities. It also provided significant support to the creation of a national platform in preparation for the five-year review of the Fourth World Conference on Women; the first publication in the country dedicated to gender statistics; and the mainstreaming of gender into policy and legislative reform.

48. The Informatics Training Centre in the UNDP/UNESCO project with the Technological University of Tajikistan has conducted training for institutions, students, government officials and private citizens in computer usage and informatics. An agreement is being negotiated with the Government to provide free Internet access for five years, thereby enabling the Informatics Training Centre to establish a firm financial foundation and offer a variety of services.

49. Following the parliamentary elections, UNDP, with OSCE, began a civic education project aimed at raising awareness among target groups within the general population (i.e., women and youth), as well as locally elected representatives. Within parliament itself, UNDP is providing technical and material support to the creation of a professional parliament, linking its activities with the UNDP programme on accountability and transparency and Management Development and Governance Division. These initiatives, which address critical issues, such as accountability and transparency, have been well received by the Government.

### L. Drug control and abuse

50. Drug trafficking has become a lucrative business in Tajikistan, owing to its proximity with Afghanistan and relative volatility. The Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention of the United Nations Secretariat estimates that a significant and increasing proportion of Afghan opium, morphine and heroin is being smuggled through Central Asia, mainly through the 1,700 km border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The narcotics are then forwarded to Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and the Russian Federation. Although some drugs are absorbed locally along the routes, the final destination of the bulk of the narcotics is Europe and, to some extent, the United States.

51. The Office is currently providing assistance to Tajik authorities in order to strengthen drug control in the country. Its effort aims to stem drug trafficking from Afghanistan into Tajikistan through the implementation of three different projects: the establishment of a specialized drug control agency, the strengthening of border control by Tajik border forces and the provision of assistance to the Russian Federal Border Service, which is deployed along sections of the Tajik border with Afghanistan.

52. The Tajik Drug Control Agency was established on 1 June 1999 by the President of Tajikistan as a follow-up to the signing of a protocol between the President and the Executive Director of the Office in April 1999. The Office is fully funding the establishment of the Agency, which is entrusted with coordinating drug control and prevention policies in the country and conducting drug control operational activities. The Agency has already carried out anti-drug operations and activities for the prevention of drug abuse.

53. The Office, with the Tajik Agency, has also promoted activities related to raising awareness of the risks posed by drug abuse, including organizing public events against drugs, such as sports events, music shows and a drawing competition among school children of Dushanbe on the theme "Children against drugs in Tajikistan". The Office is planning to further strengthen its commitments in the near future in the area of demand reduction and treatment and the rehabilitation of drug abusers. Finally, through the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Centre, the Office is carrying out a global study on the illegal drug market.

## V. International assistance

54. Of the US$ 30.3 million requested in the 1999 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Tajikistan, donors have contributed US$ 20.0 million. The response for the 2000 Appeal, however, has been even more disappointing. Despite significant improvements in the operating environment over the last 12 months, the delivery of adequate humanitarian assistance has been limited by a shortage of funding. The sum of US$ 34.8 million has been requested for Tajikistan for 2000, which is intended to provide life-saving care for vulnerable people as well as crucial rehabilitation projects to revitalize communities and restore basic

infrastructure. Less than US$ 2.6 million has been pledged to date, with an additional US$ 8.7 million recommitted from 1999 pledges for food aid. The consequences of that shortfall are dramatic. At a time when a severe drought threatens three million people, the food aid and security component of the Appeal is underfunded by approximately 50 per cent. Despite international recognition of the importance of rehabilitation and economic stability in preventing future conflict and recovery from past conflict, no funds have been provided towards a request for US$ 4.5 million. More worrying is the complete absence of funding for emergency preparedness. Tajikistan's location, in an area known for natural disasters, demands sensible and proactive preparation for future emergencies. Without support for preparedness, the ability of the humanitarian community to deal with future disasters is likely to be diminished and much slower than it would be otherwise. Additional information on funding, including contributions by specific donors, can be accessed at:

www.reliefweb.int.

55. The World Bank has allocated a US$ 93.4 million loan in the form of technical cooperation for a period of three years and US$ 100,000 in the form of grants. IMF has allocated US$ 9 million in balance of payments support. ADB has granted US$ 20 million for rehabilitation activities, of which US$ 10 million will be implemented by UNDP/RRDP.

56. The European Commission, through ECHO, has pledged 12 million euros for emergency food, health, water and sanitation, and emergency preparedness for a 12-month period, beginning in May 2000.

57. UNDP and the country team work with multilateral institutions as part of the wider development framework for Tajikistan. Cooperation takes place under the auspices of the consultative group for Tajikistan, the public investment programme, and the living standards survey, which forms the basis of work against poverty.

## VI. Concluding observations

58. Despite the conclusion of the peace process and significant progress in the security environment, limited progress has been achieved in the social and economic sectors. Access to food and basic social services, such as health, water and sanitation, and education, has been further limited by deteriorating economic conditions and the prevailing drought. Therefore, humanitarian and rehabilitation assistance remains crucial not only to sustain life but also to promote development and prevent renewed conflict. Although agencies carrying out humanitarian operations have already begun to deliver relief assistance in a way that promotes self-reliance and contributes towards economic recovery, needs are so great that the halt of relief assistance could result in disaster, an especially tragic prospect given the hardship already being caused by the drought in the region.

59. The 2000 Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Tajikistan includes projects and programmes of various United Nations organizations that would facilitate a smooth transition from pure relief to rehabilitation and sustainable development. Most of the projects, while targeting the short-term needs of the destitute population, include longer-term objectives that would contribute to post-conflict rehabilitation and recovery. The humanitarian programmes will continue to link relief to development, while meeting the basic needs of vulnerable populations. The United Nations team in Tajikistan is re-evaluating its activities in order to prepare a common strategy that would support relief and recovery activities during this transitional period, with a major focus on promoting self-reliance and sustainable development efforts.

60. A real opportunity has been presented to the international community to consolidate peace in Tajikistan. Although a good basis for peace currently exists, the lack of resources necessary to rebuild the country could deal a serious blow to Tajikistan's efforts to reintegrate former combatants, restructure basic services and rebuild its economy. As Tajikistan's economy gradually recovers, more resources are needed for the emergency programmes that sustain hundreds of thousands of people, especially in the current drought. Tajikistan faces a critical moment in its development and requires the sustained support of the international community to survive the current crisis and to build a solid future for its people.